REMARKS

The Examiner is thanked for the careful examination of the application. However, in view of the foregoing amendments and the remarks that follow, the Examiner is respectfully urged to reconsider and withdraw the outstanding objections and rejections.

Claim Grouping:

On page 2 of the Official Action, the Examiner included a section called Claim Grouping. Applicants assume that the remarks therein are intended to convey information about the rejections of the claims. Applicants assume that the remarks are not intended to attempt to define the scope of the claims mentioned therein and that such comments should not be relied upon to incorporate elements from one claim into another claim.

Claim Objections:

In response to the objection of claim 8, that claim has been amended as suggested by the Examiner. Accordingly, the objection to claim 8 should be withdrawn.

35 U.S.C. §112:

In response to the rejection of claims 20-25 and 28, relevant claims have been amended to define a computer readable medium containing a program that is executed by a computer. Accordingly, the rejection of the Examiner should be overcome by such an Amendment and the Examiner is respectfully urged to withdraw the rejection of claims 20-25 and 28 based on 35 U.S.C. §112.

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Art Rejections:

Claims 1-3, 5-9, 11-15, 17-22, and 24-28 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being allegedly anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,987,127, hereinafter *Ikenoue*. *Ikenoue* extracts additional information from inputted image data to separate the additional information from image data. In addition, newly generated additional information and additional information updated according to an analysis is then newly embedded into the pre-embedded image data. However, *Ikenoue* does not teach or suggest that when extracting additional information from the inputted image data, information concerning the location of the extracted information in the image data is extracted and stored. Specifically, since *Ikenoue* does not extract and store location information concerning the additional information, when embedding additional information, *Ikenoue* teaches that a search is newly performed for a location having a density level that enables the additional to be embedded, without considering the original location in which the extracted additional information was embedded. The location in which the additional information can be embedded is determined by searching either for a location in the image exhibiting no change in density or a location having a pre-determined density band in the case of half tones. See column 8, line 52 through column 9, line 3.

When lengthy additional information would be noticeable if embedded as is (column 7, lines 33-43), or when there is not a big enough area to embed all of the additional information (column 9, lines 4-13), *Ikenoue* divides the additional information into a plurality of blocks for embedding (column 16, lines 39-62). Marks showing the start and end of each block are added to respective blocks in order to link the additional information divided into a plurality of blocks when it is extracted at

a later stage. See column 16, line 67 through column 17, line 7. However, as disclosed in step S1307 of Figure 25 and at column 13, lines 4-26, the locations of the additional information are deleted after the additional information has been extracted.

The search for areas in which to newly embed additional information divided into blocks is also performed according to the density band of the image as disclosed in Figures 29 and 33, as well as in corresponding sections of the description.

In other words, in the case of new or updated additional information being embedded in an image after the extraction of additional information from the inputted image data, *Ikenoue* searches once again for locations in which the additional information can be embedded according to the density distribution of the image.

With regard to independent claims 1, 7, 13, and 20 of the present application, *Ikenoue* does not teach or suggest that the additional information is embedded either "at a location where the pre-determined information is originally embedded", or "at a location that does not overlap locations where the detected pieces of additional information are embedded". The Examiner alleges that such features are taught at Figure 4 and column 16, lines 1-9 of *Ikenoue*. However, this teaching is not apparent from the sections of *Ikenoue* cited by the Examiner. To the extent that the Examiner persists with the rejection or these claims, the Examiner is respectfully requested to specify more specifically where *Ikenoue* teaches such features of the claims.

With regard to claims 26-28, *Ikenoue* does not teach the requirement that additional information is embedded "at a location that does not overlap a location where the detected additional information is embedded". For this feature, the

Examiner refers to Figure 4 and column 7, lines 35-43 of *Ikenoue*. However, as set forth above, it is not clear how such sections cited by the Examiner teach this element of the claims. To the extent that the Examiner persists with the rejection of claims 26-28, the Examiner is respectfully requested to more specifically point out where *Ikenoue* teaches that additional information is embedded "by referring to a location information showing a location of each of the extracted pieces of additional information, the location information being sent by the extracting unit".

Unlike *Ikenoue*, the present invention does not require that a search be performed for an embedding location every time additional information is embedded, since it is possible to embed updatable additional information extracted from inputted image data in the original location of the extracted information after being updated. Also, in the case of the extracted additional information not being updatable, the present invention enables new additional information that includes updated pre-determined information to be supplemented, by embedding this new information so as not to overlap with the original location of the extracted additional information. This facilitates subsequent management of image data.

Accordingly, in view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, the Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the outstanding rejections.

In the event that there are any questions concerning this amendment, or the application in general, the Examiner respectfully urged to contact the undersigned attorney so that prosecution of the application may be expedited.

Respectfully submitted,

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